

Community Engagement Improvement Plan

August 2024

Communications and Engagement

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander people

Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land and waters we now call Darebin and affirms that Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people have lived on this land for millennia, practising their customs and ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal.

Council acknowledges that Elders past, present and emerging are central to the cohesion, intergenerational wellbeing and ongoing self-determination of Aboriginal communities. They have played and continue to play a pivotal role in maintaining and transmitting culture, history and language.

Council respects and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' values, living culture and practices, including their continuing spiritual connection to the land and waters and their right to self-determination. Council also recognises the diversity within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities have had and continue to play a unique role in the life of the Darebin municipality. Council recognises and values this ongoing contribution and its significant value for our city and Australian society more broadly.

Extract from Darebin City Council's Statement of commitment to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, 2019.

Darebin's Diversity Statement

Situated on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, the City of Darebin is now home to a diverse community of people with different socio-economic status, gender, age, ability, race, culture, ethnicity, language, sexuality, sex characteristics, gender identity, beliefs, occupations, income, education, carer status and household type. The Darebin community cherishes this diversity and values it as an important civic asset.

Darebin City Council acknowledges the history and contributions of the various communities, migrants and refugees who have made the municipality their home. Their endeavours have enriched the economic, social, cultural, artistic, community and civic character of the city, and created a cosmopolitan locality where variety and difference are welcomed and encouraged.

Council also acknowledges that who we are today as a municipality rests on the history of loss and dispossession inflicted upon Aboriginal people, past and present, despite their strengths, resilience and continued contributions to our city.

Contents

Introduction	4
The Why, What, How and Who of Community Engagement	5
Why – Our Purpose and Aims.....	5
What – Our Tools and Channels	5
How – Our Principles and Promises.....	6
Who – Our Internal and External Audiences	7
Strategic Alignment.....	9
Council Plan	9
Organisational Strategy	10
Community Engagement Policy	10
Community Profile	11
What informed this Plan?	12
Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	12
Community Consultation	12
Consultation with staff	13
Consultation and benchmarking across the sector.....	13
Our Goals	14
Improvement areas	14
Key Actions.....	15
Outcomes	16
Resources.....	16
Community Engagement Improvement Plan Actions and Timeline	17
Appendix A: Measurement indicators... ..	20

Introduction

Darebin City Council is committed to building a fair, inclusive and equitable City, which is why we put residents, business owners and the community at the heart of our decision-making. The community engagement function at Council enables us to do this and provides our community with the opportunity to contribute to and influence Council's actions.

Council has a clear Community Engagement Policy and uses a range of engagement methods and communications tools, however at times there is low engagement from diverse groups, high engagement on local, place-based issues but low engagement on large, municipal wide issues and low levels of community influence over engagement outcomes.

Our Community Engagement Improvement plan seeks to address these challenges. It puts the community at the centre and focuses on ensuring we deliver a meaningful, trusted engagement model that is inclusive of our diverse community and is continuously improving. We want our community engagement model to be sector leading, and a benchmark for best practice.

Aligned with our *Council Plan 2021-2025*, the principles in our *Community Engagement Policy*, and a key action under *Priority 3 Value Driven Engagement and Partnerships* in our *Organisational Strategy*, our Community Engagement Improvement Plan will be a core focus for our organisation moving forward.

Our plan contains 25 actions that aims to achieve our goals that were identified through extensive consultation with staff and community and benchmarking across the sector.

Over the next three years we will focus on improving our work in these improvement areas:

- Earlier planning and more meaningful engagement
- Creating and using more accessible channels and methods
- Maximising community interest, impact and relevance in our engagement projects
- Capacity building and collaboration
- Internal process improvements
- Innovative technology and data
- Diversity and inclusion
- Relationships, trust and cultural safety
- Recognition and respect
- Trust building

It is our responsibility to ensure that the voices, perceptions and needs of our diverse community are included in Council's service planning, delivery, and decision making. Improving engagement with these groups is a key focus of the plan.

We're proud to present our Community Engagement Improvement Plan and believe it will significantly improve Council's engagement outcomes over the next three years.

The Why, What, How and Who of Community Engagement

Why – Our Purpose and Aims

The purpose of the community engagement function at Council is to provide our community with an opportunity to contribute to and influence Council's actions. It is our responsibility to ensure that the voices, perceptions and needs of our diverse community, including our multicultural and multilingual community members Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, are included in Council's service planning and delivery, and decision making. We do this by:

- Providing engagement advice to the organisation using best practice models.
- Providing advice and support for community engagement processes.
- Ensuring community engagements meet the legislated community engagement principles and our Community Engagement Policy requirements.
- Ensuring community engagements are meaningful, accessible and transparent.
- Providing education, training and resources to build the engagement capacity of the organisation.
- Providing specialist advice on best practice to communicate and engage effectively with diverse multicultural, multilingual communities.
- Strengthening relationships with community and relevant stakeholders
- Coordinating a community engagement project schedule across the organisation

What – Our Tools and Channels

We use a range of engagement and communication tools and channels to encourage our community members to participate in our engagement activities.

Some of our community engagement tools include:

Your Say Darebin platform

Our website dedicated to conversations about our projects and initiatives.

Online engagement tools

Online surveys, voting polls, vision boards etc. offline versions are always available.

Pop-up Events

Pop up stalls within the municipality where community members can participate in our engagement activities.

Community Workshops

Organised workshops with existing groups or open to the public where community members can participate in our engagement activities.

Information sessions

Formal sessions usually open to the public for community to learn more about a project or initiative.

Deliberative engagement tools

Community panels, citizen assemblies etc. that allow community to deliberate and decide on key issues.

Hearings of Submission

Formal processes where community members can raise issues at special council meetings.

Some of our communications tools include:

Your Say Darebin enewsletters to members
 Newsletters
 Darebin Community News publication
 Letterbox drops
 Posters
 Signage
 Public notices
 Social media
 Council website

How – Our Principles and Promises

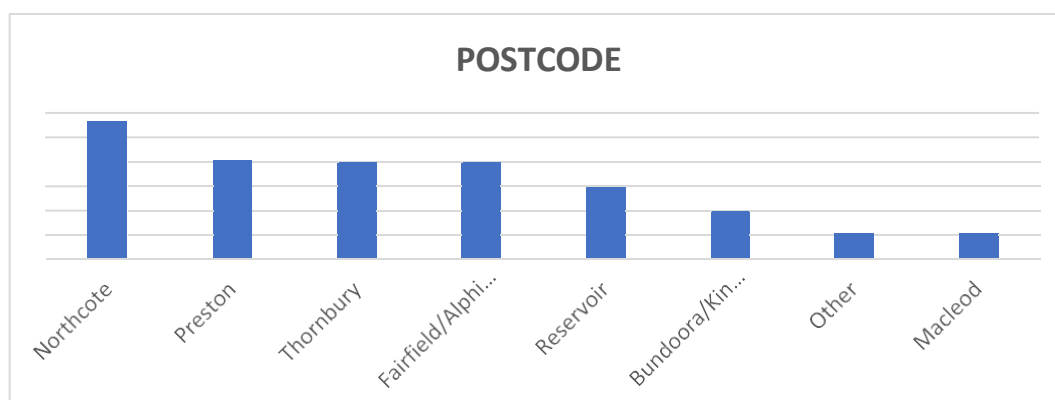
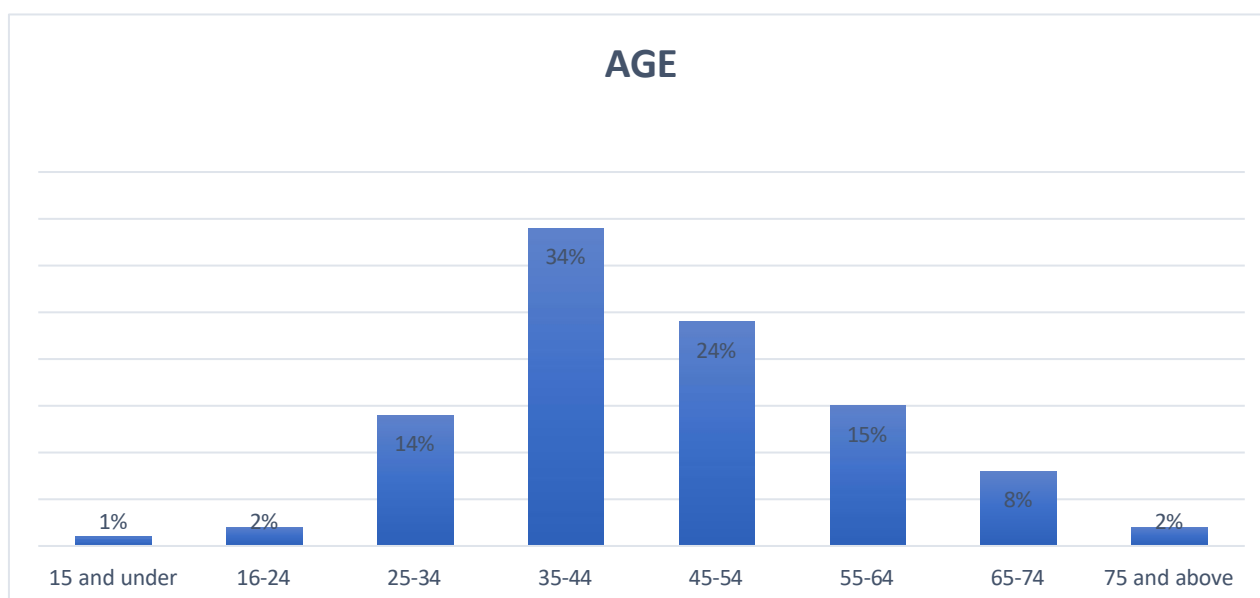
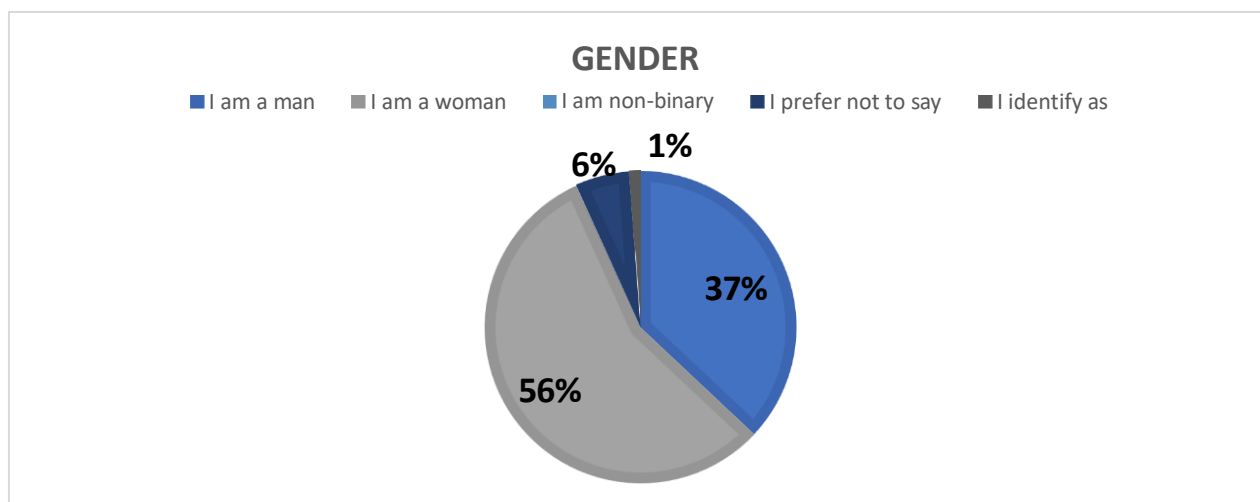
The following six principles are listed in our Community Engagement Policy and underpin community engagement at Darebin. They are the guiding rules for all engagement processes and activities undertaken, and ensure our community engagement is purposeful, representative, and is easy to be involved in.

1. A genuine opportunity to shape the way our local government works (respectful).
We set clear objectives and scope for our engagements to ensure participants have clear expectations of what they can influence and how their feedback will be used.
2. Focused on providing input to solving challenges (action oriented).
We recognise that better decisions will be made with community feedback and input.
3. Representative (focused on justice and equity).
We ensure all community members have opportunities to contribute and benefit, no matter their preferences, abilities, cultures or where they live. We recognise there are barriers for some groups and will use suitable methods, and build our relationships across our community, to remove those barriers and ensure everyone's voices are heard.
4. Build on our relationships with the community which are essential to trust in our work.
We value the insights of our community and respect the time and effort they give towards informing our decision making. We will be collaborative, consistent, transparent and will keep the community informed in our engagement approach.
5. Accessible, easy, and enjoyable (inclusive).
We focus on productive and meaningful sessions that suit the community and are enjoyable and culturally relevant. We want those involved to learn about complex issues, hear a range of perspectives, and have their own experiences and needs heard.
6. Fed back to the community (integrity).
We are committed to sharing the findings with participants and to ensuring our decisions are reported back widely to the community.

Who – Our Internal and External Audiences

Our Community Engagement program aims to reach the entire Darebin community; however, we know that some people have less opportunity to participate than others. On average just 4.5% of our population engages with us each year.

Our online engagement platform *Your Say Darebin* is actively used by some members of our community. A breakdown of our online members can be seen below.



Voices that are typically underrepresented from our online engagement space and benefit from more targeted engagement strategies include:

- Multilingual/multicultural communities
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- People with a disability
- Young people
- Older people
- People with low digital literacy
- Residents from Bundoora, Macleod and Kingsbury

Strategic Alignment

Community engagement is a core part of our work at Darebin City Council. The diagram below outlines how community engagement is critical for the development, monitoring and review of the key strategic documents that guide our work. This Community Engagement Improvement Plan was developed through the lens of key strategies, plans and related considerations.



Council Plan

The *2021-2025 Council Plan* sets out how we will deliver on our promises to make Darebin an equitable, vibrant and connected community. It outlines how Council will deliver on its promises to the community and achieve the *2041 Community Vision*, which is:

- Darebin is an equitable, vibrant and connected community.
- Darebin respects and supports First Nations People, values country, our diverse communities and places.
- Darebin commits to mitigating the climate emergency, creating prosperity for current and future generations.

Our Community Engagement Improvement Plan aligns with this vision and focuses on a community engagement model that meets the diverse needs, interests, and preferences of our community.

Organisational Strategy

Darebin's Organisational vision is to be: "a sector leading organisation that delivers the Community Vision and Council plan for our community by being:

- Value driven and purposeful
- A brilliant and responsive service provider
- Transparent, empowering and trusted
- Motivated, joyful and proud"

We want our community engagement model to be sector leading, and a benchmark for best practice. In-depth consultation with our staff and community identified the importance of delivering a meaningful, trusted community engagement model that is inclusive of our diverse community and is continuously improving. The table below outlines how our improvement plan goals align with our organisational strategy.

	Organisational strategy	What does this mean for community engagement at Darebin?
	Value driven and purposeful	Our practice will be driven by our organisational values and the community engagement principles that give our work purpose .
	Motivated, joyful and proud	We want to motivate our staff to see engagements as joyful activities that make a positive impact to communities that they can be proud of.
	A brilliant and responsive service provider	We will provide a brilliant engagement service that is responsive to the needs of our diverse communities.
	Transparent, empowering and trusted	We will focus on having a transparent, empowering and trusted relationship with our community so that we can explore, co-contribute and co-create solutions to community issues that help realise our community vision.

Community Engagement Policy

Our Community Engagement Policy ensures we conduct our community engagement in a way that includes all voices in our community. It outlines the need for us to remove the barriers people and groups in the community might encounter. It also ensures our engagement practice is open and transparent to ensure the community can trust the decisions we make as caretakers of this City.

The Policy outlines the roles and responsibilities Darebin staff have in relation to Community Engagement and includes the legislative principles and requirements we are required to abide by under the Local Government Act (2020). The review of our Community Engagement Policy by February 2025 is a key action in this improvement plan.

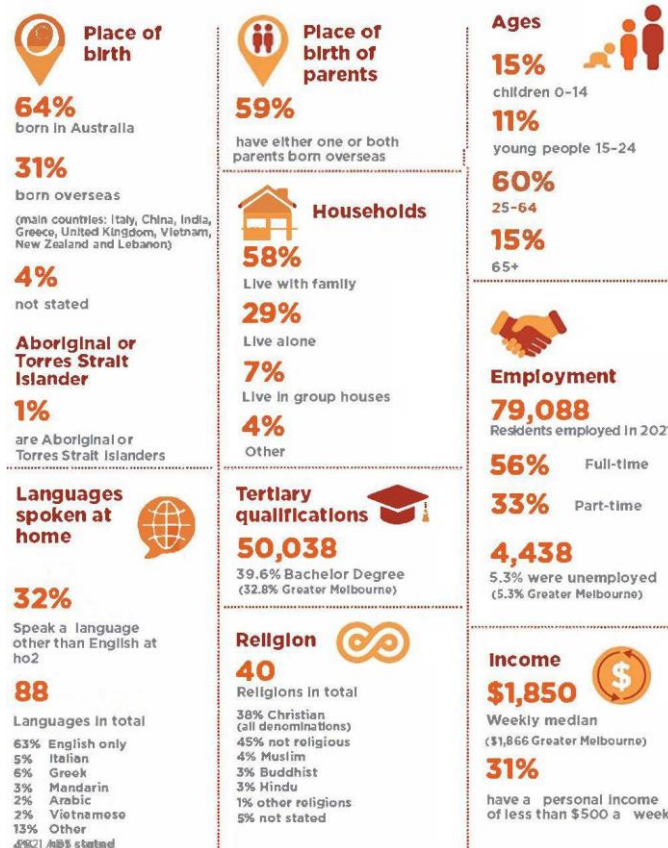
Community Profile

This improvement plan has a particular focus on improving engagement with diverse groups in our community who we know experience barriers to participation.

The City of Darebin is a region rich in culture and diversity. In 2023 there are over 155,000 people living in a vibrantly growing multicultural and multifaith community. The municipality is a home to people from over 110 countries and speaking 88 languages.

About one-third of our residents were born overseas and 1% of total population are of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background (this is higher % than that for Greater Melbourne). Over 6% of our residents require help with their day-to-day lives due to disability. Unemployment rate at 5.8% is the same as that for Greater Melbourne. The Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage for the City of Darebin is 1,081. It varies for different suburbs throughout the municipality from very low to very high.

Quick Facts About Darebin



What informed this Plan?

Annual Community Satisfaction Survey

The Annual Community Satisfaction Survey provides valuable insights into community satisfaction with Council's engagement and consultation activities. In 2023 satisfaction with Council's community consultation and engagement performance declined by 12% to 6.0 out of 10. This score is measurably lower than our long-term average satisfaction (6.6). This score was accompanied by several verbatim comments reflecting a perception in the community that Council was not consulting or engaging sufficiently with the community including comments such as:

- *"I don't get engaged"*
- *"They don't consult or communicate. The decisions are already made, and they just make community listen"*
- *"Council does what it wants. Community consultation is just to show"*

Community Consultation

In addition to the results from the 2023 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey, findings from several recent community consultations were used to inform this plan. The consultations included the following groups:

- Multicultural and multilingual community members
- Elderly community members
- Young people
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members
- People with disability
- General community

Some of the key themes uncovered during these consultations included:

- The importance of communicating through a variety of accessible channels
- Relationships, trust and cultural safety
- Transparency
- Accessibility and inclusion
- Recognition and respect

These findings and key themes were used to inform the development of our improvement plan actions.

Consultation with staff

Several internal workshops including and a thorough Equity Impact Assessment process with relevant staff informed this plan. At the staff workshop staff were asked to consider dilemmas relating to areas for improvement and brainstorm challenges and opportunities within each area.

Some of the key themes uncovered during these consultations included a need for:

- Early planning and more meaningful engagement.
- Capacity building, collaboration and relationships.
- Innovation, technology and data.
- Community representation and accessibility.
- Clearer communication, setting parameters and closing the loop.
- Internal process improvements.
- Community impact and relevance.

The findings from these sessions informed the development of our improvement plan actions.

Consultation and benchmarking across the sector

Several local councils and industry leaders were consulted to inform this improvement plan. We were particularly interested in understanding the challenges faced by other councils and engagement agencies and the strategies they use to conduct meaningful engagement with their communities. Below is a list of stakeholders consulted during the development of this plan.

Banyule City Council	Social PinPoint
Moonee Valley City Council	Tamarack Institute
Wyndham City Council	IAP2 Australasia
Brimbank City Council	
Port Phillip City Council	
City of Kingston	
Frankston City Council	
City of Yarra	
Hume City Council	
City of Casey	
City of Ballarat	
City of Monash	
City of Wodonga	
City of Parramatta	

Our Goals

We have identified the following goals to aim for to improve our community engagement approach.

Goal 1: We engage with our community in meaningful, accessible and interesting ways on issues that matter to them.

Goal 2: We maintain a collaborative and continuously improving engagement model that prioritises innovation, evaluation and capacity building.

Goal 3: We offer an inclusive and culturally safe environment to learn from the rich knowledge, experiences and feedback of our diverse communities.

Goal 4: We build a connected, credible, and trusted relationship with the community based on mutual respect and accountability.

Improvement areas:

Each goal is associated with several improvement areas.

We engage with our community in meaningful, accessible and interesting ways on issues that matter to them.

We do this by:

- Early planning and meaningful engagement:
Ensure that community engagement is considered as an important element in the early stages of project planning and is included in the project's budget. This will enable more opportunities for innovative engagement methods including deliberative engagement, and greater community influence over project outcomes.
- Accessible channels and methods:
Make engaging easy by ensuring that a range of diverse and suitable methods are incorporated into the process, including outreach, traditional methods of engagement and channels used by the community.
- Community interest, impact and relevance:
Ensure engagements are relevant and impactful, connect to bigger issues, make sense to the community and respect the needs and interests of diverse communities.

We maintain a collaborative and continuously improving engagement model that prioritises innovation, evaluation, and capacity building.

We do this by:

- Capacity building and collaboration:
Create a collaborative environment of resource sharing for staff to share learnings, contacts, relationships and information relating to community engagements.
- Internal process improvements:
Strengthen internal processes at all levels of the organisation so the best practice is implemented.

- Innovation technology and data:

Leverage innovative technology such as virtual reality, social media, gamification and data analysis to reach broad audiences and enhance community experiences.

We offer an inclusive and culturally safe environment to learn from the rich knowledge, experiences, and feedback of our diverse communities.

We do this by:

- Diversity and inclusion:

Ensure diverse representation and intersectionality is addressed through the application of our minimum standards of engagement.

- Relationships, trust and cultural safety:

Focus on building relationships and creating safe spaces for community members to share feedback.

We build a connected, credible, and trusted relationship with the community based on mutual respect and accountability.

We do this by:

- Recognition and respect:

Respect the time, needs and preferences of community members when asking for feedback and recognise their expertise.

- Trust building:

Deliver clear, transparent communication that outlines engagement parameters and closes the loop to maintain trust and accountability.

Key Actions

This is a summary of how the actions in this plan address our key improvement areas. For a full list of improvement plan actions see the table at end of this document.

Goal 1: We engage with our community in meaningful, accessible and interesting ways on issues that matter to them.

Actions under this goal focus on improving engagement experiences and increasing the influence that our community has on the outcomes of our engagement projects. Actions include improving our close the loop process, using fun and interactive engagement methods and having a more visible presence in the community through regular pop ups and other events.

Goal 2: We maintain a collaborative and continuously improving engagement model that prioritizes innovation, evaluation, and capacity building.

This goal relates to building the capacity of our workforce, both within the community engagement team and wider Darebin staff, improving our internal process and leveraging technology to improve our engagement activities. Actions include developing a structured staff training program, setting up a Community of Practice and embedding community engagement into our project management processes.

Goal 3: We offer an inclusive and culturally safe environment to learn from the rich knowledge, experiences, and feedback of our diverse communities.

Actions under this goal focus on building relationships, creating safe spaces, and ensuring our diverse community has an opportunity to participate in our engagement activities. Actions include establishing a community panel, establishing a community leadership program and developing best practice guidelines for engaging with key groups.

Goal 4: We build a connected, credible, and trusted relationship with the community based on mutual respect and accountability.

This goal relates to the importance of respecting the time, needs and preferences of our community and the need for clear, transparent communication that builds trust and accountability. Actions include a review of the minimum standards of engagement in our Community Engagement Policy and establishing an evaluation and reporting framework.

Outcomes

Based on our four goals we expect to see the following outcomes at the completion of our three-year improvement plan:

- ✓ Increased community participation and satisfaction. Community validates and co-creates solutions to problems faced by council and Council has confidence that its services align with community aspirations and expectations.
- ✓ Increased capacity and confidence in our ability to deliver a sector leading engagement model.
- ✓ Improved relationships and increased participation from diverse communities in our engagement activities.
- ✓ Increased satisfaction from community in our consultation and engagement processes.

Resources

The actions proposed in this improvement plan require various amounts of resources. Each action has been categorised as low, medium or high resource intensity. The low and many of the medium intensity actions have been scheduled for year one and will be undertaken using our existing resources.

The high and some of the medium resource intensity actions require additional resourcing and will be considered as part of individual business cases once further feasibility and cost benefit research has been undertaken.

Community Engagement Improvement Plan Actions and Timeline

Action	Timeframe (year)			Goal	Additional resources required?	Risk Low/ Medium/ High
	1	2	3			
1. Develop and implement a structured "Close the Loop" process with defined checkpoints and roles to regularly update the community on project status and outcomes and keep the organisation accountable (e.g. report card).	X			1	No	Low
2. Develop a proactive and consistent approach to sharing celebratory-style news, showcasing successful engagement outcomes.	X			4	No	Low
3. Introduce a dedicated section on the "Your Say" page titled "What can Your Feedback Influence?" per engagement outlining the direct impact community input can have on decision-making processes.	X			4	No	Low
4. Establish a dedicated section within the Darebin Community News publication specifically tailored for community engagements.	X			1	No	Low
5. As part of website redevelopment prioritise the visibility of the "sign up here" function to promote engagement opportunities.	X			1	No	Low
6. Establish an engagement support matrix with tiers (gold, silver, bronze) and minimum requirements, including setting a minimum budget for accessible communications including translations, transcriptions and graphic design, videos etc. Report quarterly to ELT on upcoming engagements and level of support allocated in line with matrix.	X			2	No	Low
7. Integrate a structured reflection process into all community engagement projects, including staff-to-staff congratulations, best practice sharing, annual wrap-ups, ongoing feedback process and coordinating workshops led by successful teams to promote peer education and role modelling.	X	X		2	No	Low

8. Establish a consistent evaluation and reporting framework for all engagement projects including checking that engagement has been meaningful for participants.	X	X		4	No	Low
9. Implement the customer research work on use of personas to channel strategy and better target audiences.	X	X		3	No	Low
10. Explore opportunities to partner with tertiary education providers in the area for the purposes of reaching young people and international students and leveraging academic expertise, resources, and networks.	X	X		3	No	Low
11. Review the Community Engagement Policy with particular focus on refining the minimum standards for engagement.	X			4	No	Low
12. Implement a structured program for regular staff training sessions aimed to build community engagement capacity including, community engagement timelines and processes, lap2 spectrum of engagement, using demographic data tools, the benefits of deliberative engagement and diverse communications and engagement best practices.		X	X	2	No	Low
13. Form a Community of Practice made up of selected Darebin staff with community engagement skills for the purposes of knowledge sharing, training opportunities and supporting engagement activities.		X	X	2	No	Low
14. Research, test and implement fun and interactive engagement methods including virtual and augmented reality technologies and promote these methods over traditional approaches.		X	X	1	No	Low
15. Assess the feasibility, costs and benefits of establishing a Community Panel comprised of engaged and interested community members convening regularly to offer advice and feedback on community engagement activities.		X	X	3	Yes	High
16. Develop a model and resource infrastructure for regular pop ups and aim for attendance at significant places where community gathers (including neighbourhoods houses) and all major events (including citizenship ceremonies) to establish a visible and accessible presence across the municipality.		X	X	1	Yes	Medium

17. Embed Community Engagement process into our project management processes to ensure Community Engagement is considered and planned for proactively (through systems, process and training).		X	X	2	No	Low
18. Investigate the feasibility, costs and benefits of establishing a community engagement leadership program employing community leaders from diverse backgrounds to promote, share and provide advice on community engagement activities.		X	X	3	Yes	High
19. Work with Darebin's advisory groups to develop best practice guides for engaging with key groups e.g. multifaith and multicultural, LGTBTIQ+, disability, young people, Aboriginal communities etc.		X		3	No	Low
20. Explore the option of embedding community engagement as a standing agenda item on advisory group meetings to obtain advice from them on how to tailor engagements for that audience and get an ongoing pulse check on issues that matter to them.	X			3	No	Low
21. Explore the development and roll out of new resident 'welcome packs' featuring key information about Darebin and how to get involved in engagements and explore a similar model for international students e.g. attend induction week.		X		3	Yes	Low
22. Explore possibilities to enhance and harness the requirement for Council Officers with relationships with diverse stakeholders to support/participate/ facilitate engagement with these groups for major engagements.	X			3	No	Low
23. Develop engagement video and a postcard to promote connection and opportunities to engage.	X			4	Yes	Low
24. In the reviewed Community Engagement Policy imbed specific time-lines for undertaking engagement and specify exceptions to these timelines.	X			2	No	Low
25. Ensure that our Transparency Policy is clearly reflected in Governance Rules and Community Engagement Policy.				4	No	Low

Appendix A: Measurement indicators

Action	Measurement
1. Develop and implement a structured "Close the Loop" process with defined checkpoints to regularly update the community on project status and outcomes and keep the organisation accountable (e.g. report card).	Output: All projects undertake close the loop process within three months of engagement closing.
2. Develop a proactive and consistent approach to sharing celebratory-style news, showcasing successful engagement outcomes.	Output: Positive engagement stories shared on social media and other communications as appropriate.
3. Introduce a dedicated section on the "Your Say" page titled "What can Your Feedback Influence?" per engagement outlining the direct impact community input can have on decision-making processes.	Output: All <i>Your Say</i> pages have dedicated section embedded into "What can Your Feedback Influence?"
4. Establish a dedicated section within DCN specifically tailored for community engagements.	Output: All DCN editions have dedicated engagement article.
5. As part of website redevelopment prioritize the visibility of the "sign up here" function to promote engagement opportunities.	Output: 500 new <i>Your Say</i> Darebin members per year
6. Establish an engagement support matrix with tiers (gold, silver, bronze) and minimum requirements, including setting a minimum budget for accessible communications (all comms should be clear and accessible) including translations, transcreations and graphic design, videos etc and report quarterly to ELT on upcoming engagements and level of support allocated in line with matrix.	Output: All community engagement projects are allocated a gold silver bronze status during planning stage with appropriate resources accordingly. .
7. Integrate a structured reflection process into all community engagement projects, including staff-to-staff congratulations, best practice sharing, annual wrap-ups, ongoing feedback process and coordinating workshops led by successful teams to promote peer education and role modelling.	Output: Regular internal articles to celebrates successes.
8. Establish a consistent evaluation and reporting framework for all engagement projects including checking that engagement has been meaningful for participants.	Output: All projects complete a reflection report.

9. Implement the customer research work on use of personas to channel strategy and better target audiences.	Output: Dedicated personas developed and used.
10. Explore opportunities to partner with tertiary education providers in the area for the purposes of reaching young people and leveraging academic expertise, resources, and networks.	Output: Develop partnership and attend minimum two events per year.
11. Review the Community Engagement Policy with particular focus on refining the minimum standards for engagement	Output: Community Engagement Policy adopted by Council in February 2025.
12. Implement a structured program for regular staff training sessions aimed to build community engagement capacity including, community engagement timelines and processes, lap2 spectrum of engagement, using demographic data tools, the benefits of deliberative engagement and diverse communications and engagement best practices.	Output: Minimum six staff training sessions per year
13. Form a Community of Practice made up of selected Darebin staff with community engagement skills for the purposes of knowledge sharing, training opportunities and supporting engagement activities.	Output: Minimum 15 x Darebin staff signed up to Community of Practice.
14. Research, test and implement fun and interactive engagement methods including virtual and augmented reality technologies and promote these methods over traditional approaches like surveys.	Output: Explore opportunities and 50% of engagement projects to have an interactive element (not a survey).
15. Assess the feasibility, costs and benefits of establishing a Community Panel comprised of engaged and interested community members convening regularly to offer advice and feedback on community engagement activities.	Output: Develop business case for 30-member community panel.
16. Develop a model and resource infrastructure for regular pop ups and aim for attendance at significant places where community gathers and all major events (including citizenship ceremonies) to establish a visible and accessible presence across the municipality and include opportunities for councillor involvement where appropriate.	Output: Minimum eight pop ups per year.

17. Embed Community Engagement process into our project management processes to ensure Community Engagement is considered and planned for pro-actively. (through systems, process and training).	Output: Engagement included in Pulse software, ELT/Cr reports and other relevant processes.
18. Investigate the feasibility, costs and benefits of establishing a community engagement leadership program employing community leaders from diverse backgrounds to promote, share and provide advice on community engagement activities.	Output: Develop business case for leadership program.
19. Work with Darebin's Advisory groups to develop best practice guides for engaging with key groups e.g. LGTBTIQ+, Disability, young people, Aboriginal communities etc.	Output: Minimum five best practice guides developed.
20. Explore the option of embedding community engagement as a standing agenda item on advisory group meetings to obtain advice from them on how to tailor engagements for that audience and get an ongoing pulse check on issues that matter to them.	Output: Meet with all advisory groups at least once per year.
21. Explore the development and roll out of new resident 'welcome packs' featuring key information about Darebin and how to get involved in engagements.	Output: Develop business case.
22. Explore possibilities to enhance and harness the requirement for Council Officers with relationships with diverse stakeholders to support/participate/ facilitate engagement with these groups for major engagements.	Output: Increased number of participants from diverse backgrounds.
23. Develop engagement video and a postcard to promote connection and opportunities to engage.	Output: Engagement video and postcard developed.
24. In the reviewed Community Engagement Policy imbed specific timelines for undertaking engagement and specify exceptions to these timelines.	Output: Policy specifies staff expectations for planning and undertaking engagements.
25. Ensure that our Transparency Policy is clearly reflected in Governance Rules and Community Engagement Policy.	Output: Transparency Policy mentioned in Governance Rules and Engagement Policy.